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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT
FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY

U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

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Subject: "REFRIGERATORS TO THE RESCUE". Information from rural electrification specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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When you're right in the middle of canning and the hands of the clock get around towards mealtime...well, that's when most of us, at least, would give our last sugar stamp for a magic wand and a little black box to make a meal appear on our tables.

But since magic wands and little black boxes have been on the strictly rationed list for a long time, let's look at the white box which already stands in your kitchen. I mean your refrigerator.

You can take a tip about using that refrigerator from the folks who make a business of serving meals and lunches on a moment's notice. Restaurants, cafes, and other eating places depend upon refrigerators well stocked with a variety of ready-to-serve food to fill orders quickly. In the home, too, a well-managed refrigerator becomes almost a magic box from which a busy homemaker can whisk a tempting and appetizing meal in just a few minutes.

But first you need to give some thought to what goes in the refrigerator. Take vegetables. Whether yours come from a Victory Garden or a market, you can save time by getting enough for several meals at one trip. That way they can all be washed and prepared at the same time and placed in the refrigerator ready to use. Thoroughly wash and look over greens. Wash and top other vegetables like beets and carrots. You can shell the peas and put them into a covered container. As for green beans, wash them, but don't string or break them at the tips until you're ready to cook them.



Of course a well-stocked refrigerator can provide what you need for at least two or three kinds of mixed and molded salads. You can wash lettuce and salad greens---tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers and the like---in a spare moment and place them in the crisper, ready for slicing. You can prepare molded salads when you have a moment to spare the afternoon or evening before you plan to use them. With these in the refrigerator, and a supply of favorite salad dressings, even the most hurried meal need not be without its vitamin-rich salad.

Now about meats. In selecting roasts, get cuts large enough so you will have some left over for slicing and serving cold. You can prepare such favorites as stews and chili in large quantities and keep them over in the refrigerator to re-heat for later meals. For further variety, keep some cold cuts on hand or make an occasional gelatin meat loaf out of leftovers. And don't forget cheese. If your family is fond of it, keep a jar of cottage cheese in your refrigerator as well as a supply of their favorite kinds of sliced cheese so far as your ration books will permit.

Incidentally, when you roast meat, make sure to save the drippings as a base for soups and gravies. Vegetable purees and soup stocks go into your refrigerator for the same reason. These, together with a large jar of white sauce, will enable you to perform feats of magic with quickly prepared soups, gravies, sauces and a variety of dishes, like creamed new peas, creamed asparagus or creamed cheese, eggs or tuna fish on toast.

If you want to really please your family---and save time, too---reserve one corner of the refrigerator for good things to go into your oven. When you make rolls, make enough so you'll have some to put away in the refrigerator. With this ready to mix into pans, you can serve fresh rolls as often as you like. You can prepare refrigerator cookies in advance in the same way. Many homemakers go a step farther and make their own pastry mixes for pie crusts, baking powder biscuits, and even short cake. To do this, mix the dry ingredients first, then cut in the fat and



store the mixture in a covered jar in the refrigerator. With this at hand you can mix a pastry dough in no time at all, simply by adding liquid to the prepared mixture. You can also mix cakes in advance and keep in the refrigerator until baking time.

Of course your refrigerator will make and keep a variety of easily-prepared desserts -- ice cream, sherberts, and fruit salads, just to mention a few favorites. Chilled fruit also makes an excellent summer dessert and will keep in the refrigerator for several days without spoiling. Berries, however, should be used within two or three days and should not be washed or stemmed until shortly before they are served.

Wise homemakers and experienced hostesses like to have the essentials for a variety of cool and healthful summer drinks on hand, not only for use at mealtime but when guests drop in. What you put in your refrigerator will depend upon the likes and dislikes of your family. Iced tea and iced coffee are among adult favorites while children generally like chocolate milk which they can mix for themselves with chocolate syrup from your refrigerator. If it's lemonade your family likes, a lemon syrup will also save time and sugar. Make it by boiling equal parts of sugar and water and adding lemon juice after the syrup has cooled. Or, of course, you can use other fruit juices, including juice left over from canned fruit.

Of course we haven't talked about every refrigerator shortcut for these busy summer days. You'll think of others, many that fit in particularly well with your own household. The point is that with a well-stocked refrigerator, mealtime emergencies---morning, noon or night--have a way of disappearing into thin air, or of not even arising at all. And though there's nothing "magic" about the refrigerator in your kitchen, you're apt to find yourself putting meals on the table with an ease and deftness that will leave even you a little surprised and breathless.

